## AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 19, 2006

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2005-06 REGULAR SESSION

## ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2108

## Introduced by Assembly Member Evans (Coauthors: Assembly Members Bermudez, Lieber, and Pavley)

February 17, 2006

An act to amend Sections 27315, 27361, 27363, 27363.5, 27365, and 42001 of, and to add Sections 27360.1 and 27360.6 to, and to repeal and add Sections 27360 and 27360.5 of, the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2108, as amended, Evans. Vehicles: child passengers.

(1) Existing law establishes rules of the road governing the operation of vehicles upon the highways.—Violation A violation of these rules—are is a public-offenses offense.

Existing law prohibits a parent or legal guardian, while present in a motor vehicle, from permitting his or her child or ward to be transported upon a highway in the vehicle without providing and properly securing the child or ward in a rear seat in a child passenger restraint system meeting applicable federal safety standards, unless the child or ward is 6 years of age or older or weighs 60 pounds or more. Existing law imposes a similar prohibition on the driver of a vehicle, unless the parent or legal guardian of the child is also present in the vehicle and is not the driver. Existing law places certain duties and restrictions on hospitals, clinics, and birthing centers, as well as car rental agencies, involving providing information and notices regarding child passenger restraint system laws.

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This bill would recast these provisions by requiring that a child who is under 8 years of age be secured in a rear seat in an appropriate child passenger restraint system, and by requiring that a child who is 8 years of age or older, but less than 13 years of age, be secured in a rear seat in an appropriate child passenger restraint system or safety belt, thereby expanding the scope of an existing crime. The bill would provide an exception from the child passenger restraint system requirement for a child who is under the age of 8 years of age, but who is 4 feet 9 inches tall or taller and who is properly restrained by a safety belt. The bill would prohibit a parent or legal guardian, or driver from transporting a child or ward who is 13 years of age or older, but less than 16 years of age without properly securing the child or ward in an appropriate child passenger restraint system or safety belt.

The bill additionally would require for transport upon a highway in a motor vehicle, that a parent or legal guardian, to properly secure his or her child or ward who is under the age of 8 years of age in a rear-facing child passenger restraint system meeting applicable federal standards, for transport upon a highway in a motor vehicle that is rear-facing, unless the child or ward is one year of age or older and also weighs 20 pounds or more. The bill would impose a similar requirement on the driver of a vehicle, unless the parent or legal guardian of the child is also present in the vehicle and is not the driver.

The bill would consolidate and make conforming changes in existing law.

Because this bill would expand the scope of existing crimes and would create a new crime, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

(2) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that no reimbursement is required by this act for a specified reason.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: yes.

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The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

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SECTION 1. Section 27315 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

- 27315. (a) The Legislature finds that a mandatory seatbelt law will contribute to reducing highway deaths and injuries by encouraging greater usage of existing manual seatbelts, that automatic crash protection systems which require no action by vehicle occupants offer the best hope of reducing deaths and injuries, and that encouraging the use of manual safety belts is only a partial remedy for addressing this major cause of death and injury. The Legislature declares that the enactment of this section is intended to be compatible with support for federal safety standards requiring automatic crash protection systems and should not be used in any manner to rescind federal requirements for installation of automatic restraints in new cars.
- (b) This section shall be known and may be cited as the Motor Vehicle Safety Act.
- (c) (1) As used in this section, "motor vehicle" means a passenger vehicle, a motortruck, or a truck tractor, but does not include a motorcycle.
- (2) For purposes of this section, a "motor vehicle" also means any farm labor vehicle, regardless of the date of certification under Section 31401.
- (d) (1) A person may not operate a motor vehicle on a highway unless that person and all passengers 16 years of age or over are properly restrained by a safety belt. This paragraph does not apply to the operator of a taxicab, as defined in Section 27908, when the taxicab is driven on a city street and is engaged in the transportation of a fare-paying passenger. The safety belt requirement established by this paragraph is the minimum safety standard applicable to employees being transported in a motor vehicle. This paragraph does not preempt any more stringent or restrictive standards imposed by the Labor Code or any other state or federal regulation regarding the transportation of employees in a motor vehicle.
- (2) The operator of a limousine for hire or the operator of an authorized emergency vehicle, as defined in subdivision (a) of Section 165, may not operate the limousine for hire or authorized emergency vehicle unless the operator and any passengers 13

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years of age or over, in the front seat are properly restrained by a 2 safety belt.

- (3) The operator of a taxicab may not operate the taxicab unless any passengers 13 years of age or over, in the front seat are properly restrained by a safety belt.
- (e) A person 16 years of age or over may not be a passenger in a motor vehicle on a highway unless that person is properly restrained by a safety belt. This subdivision does not apply to a passenger in a sleeper berth, as defined in subdivision (v) of Section 1201 of Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations.
- (f) Every owner of a motor vehicle, including every owner or operator of a taxicab, as defined in Section 27908, or a limousine for hire, operated on a highway shall maintain safety belts in good working order for the use of occupants of the vehicle. The safety belts shall conform to motor vehicle safety standards established by the United States Department of Transportation. This subdivision does not, however, require installation or maintenance of safety belts where not required by the laws of the United States applicable to the vehicle at the time of its initial sale.
- (g) This section does not apply to a passenger or operator with a physically disabling condition or medical condition which would prevent appropriate restraint in a safety belt, if the condition is duly certified by a licensed physician and surgeon or by a licensed chiropractor who shall state the nature of the condition, as well as the reason the restraint is inappropriate. This section also does not apply to a public employee, when in an authorized emergency vehicle as defined in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 165, or to any passenger in any seat behind the front seat of an authorized emergency vehicle as defined in paragraph (1) of subdivision (b) of Section 165 operated by the public employee, unless required by the agency employing the public employee.
- (h) Notwithstanding subdivision (a) of Section 42001, a violation of subdivision (d), (e), or (f) is an infraction punishable by a fine of not more than twenty dollars (\$20) for a first offense, and a fine of not more than fifty dollars (\$50) for each subsequent offense. In lieu of the fine and any penalty assessment or court costs, the court, pursuant to Section 42005, may order that a person convicted of a first offense attend a

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school for traffic violators or any other court-approved program in which the proper use of safety belts is demonstrated.

- (i) In a civil action, a violation of subdivision (d), (e), or (f) or information of a violation of subdivision (h) does not establish negligence as a matter of law or negligence per se for comparative fault purposes, but negligence may be proven as a fact without regard to the violation.
- (j) If the United States Secretary of Transportation fails to adopt safety standards for manual safety belt systems by September 1, 1989, a motor vehicle manufactured after that date for sale or sold in this state shall not be registered unless it contains a manual safety belt system which meets the performance standards applicable to automatic crash protection devices adopted by the Secretary of Transportation pursuant to Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 208 (49 C.F.R. 571.208) as in effect on January 1, 1985.
- (k) Each motor vehicle offered for original sale in this state which has been manufactured on or after September 1, 1989, shall comply with the automatic restraint requirements of Section S4.1.2.1 of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 208 (49 C.F.R. 571.208), as published in Volume 49 of the Federal Register, No. 138, page 29009. Any An automobile manufacturer who sells or delivers a motor vehicle subject to the requirements of this subdivision, and fails to comply with this subdivision, shall be punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500) for each sale or delivery of a noncomplying motor vehicle.
- (*l*) Compliance with subdivision (j) or (k) by a manufacturer shall be made by self-certification in the same manner as self-certification is accomplished under federal law.
- (m) This section does not apply to a person actually engaged in delivery of newspapers to customers along the person's route if the person is properly restrained by a safety belt prior to commencing and subsequent to completing delivery on the route.
- (n) This section does not apply to a person actually engaged in collection and delivery activities as a rural delivery carrier for the United States Postal Service if the person is properly restrained by a safety belt prior to stopping at the first box and subsequent to stopping at the last box on the route.

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(o) This section does not apply to a driver actually engaged in the collection of solid waste or recyclable materials along that driver's collection route if the driver is properly restrained by a safety belt prior to commencing and subsequent to completing the collection route.

- (p) Subdivisions (d), (e), (f), (g), and (h) shall become inoperative immediately upon the date that the United States Secretary of Transportation, or his or her delegate, determines to rescind the portion of the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 208 (49 C.F.R. 571.208) which requires the installation of automatic restraints in new motor vehicles, except that those subdivisions shall not become inoperative if the secretary's decision to rescind that Standard No. 208 is not based, in any respect, on the enactment or continued operation of those subdivisions.
  - SEC. 2. Section 27360 of the Vehicle Code is repealed.
  - SEC. 3. Section 27360 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:
- 27360. (a) A parent, legal guardian, or driver shall not transport on a highway in a motor vehicle, as defined in Section 27315, a child or ward who is under eight years of age, without properly securing that child in a rear seat in an appropriate child passenger restraint system meeting applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards.
- (b) Subdivision (a) does not apply to a driver if the parent or legal guardian of the child is also present in the motor vehicle and is not the driver.
- SEC. 4. Section 27360.1 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:
- 27360.1. (a) A parent, legal guardian, or driver shall not transport on a highway in a motor vehicle, as defined in Section 27315, a child or ward who is eight years of age or older, but less than 13 years of age, without properly securing that child in a rear seat in an appropriate child passenger restraint system or safety belt meeting applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards.
- (b) Subdivision (a) does not apply to a driver if the parent or legal guardian of the child is also present in the motor vehicle and is not the driver.
- 39 SEC. 5. Section 27360.5 of the Vehicle Code is repealed.

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1 SEC. 6. Section 27360.5 is added to the Vehicle Code, to 2 read:

27360.5. (a) A parent, legal guardian, or driver shall not transport on a highway in a motor vehicle, as defined in Section 27315, a child or ward who is 13 years of age or older, but less than 16 years of age, without properly securing that child or ward in an appropriate child passenger restraint system or safety belt meeting applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards.

- (b) Subdivision (a) does not apply to a driver if the parent or legal guardian of the child is also present in the motor vehicle and is not the driver.
- SEC. 7. Section 27360.6 is added to the Vehicle Code, to read:

27360.6. (a) (1) For a conviction under Section 27360, 27360.1, or 27360.5, a first offense is punishable by a fine of one hundred dollars (\$100), except that the court may reduce or waive the fine if the defendant establishes to the satisfaction of the court that he or she is economically disadvantaged, and the court, instead, refers the defendant to a community education program that includes, but is not limited to, education on the proper installation and use of a child passenger restraint system for children of all ages, and provides certification to the court of completion of that program. Upon completion of the program, the defendant shall provide proof of participation in the program. If an education program on the proper installation and use of a child passenger restraint system is not available within 50 miles of the residence of the defendant, the requirement to participate in that program shall be waived. If the fine is paid, waived, or reduced, the court shall report the conviction to the department pursuant to Section 1803.

- (2) The court may require a defendant described under paragraph (1) to attend an education program that includes demonstration of proper installation and use of a child passenger restraint system and provides certification to the court that the defendant has presented for inspection a child passenger restraint system that meets applicable federal safety standards.
- (b) (1) A second or subsequent conviction of the same section is punishable by a fine of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250), no part of which may be waived by the court, except that the court may reduce or waive the fine if the defendant establishes to the

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satisfaction of the court that he or she is economically disadvantaged, and the court, instead refers the defendant to a community education program that includes, but is not limited to, education on the proper installation and use of child passenger restraint systems for children of all ages, and provides certification to the court of completion of that program. Upon completion of the program, the defendant shall provide proof of participation in the program. If an education program on the proper installation and use of a child passenger restraint system is not available within 50 miles of the residence of the defendant, the requirement to participate in that program shall be waived. If the fine is paid, waived, or reduced, the court shall report the conviction to the department pursuant to Section 1803. 

- (2) The court may require a defendant described under paragraph (1) to attend an education program that includes demonstration of proper installation and use of a child passenger restraint system and provides certification to the court that the defendant has presented for inspection a child passenger restraint system that meets applicable federal safety standards.
- (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the fines collected under this section shall be allocated as follows:
- (1) (A) Sixty percent to health departments of local jurisdictions where the violation occurred, to be used for a community education program that includes, but is not limited to, demonstration of the installation of a child passenger restraint system for children of all ages and also assists an economically disadvantaged family in obtaining a restraint system through a low-cost purchase or loan. The county or city health department shall designate a coordinator to facilitate the creation of a special account and to develop a relationship with the court system to facilitate the transfer of funds to the program. The county or city may contract for the implementation of the program. Prior to obtaining possession of a child passenger restraint system pursuant to this section, a person shall attend an education program that includes demonstration of proper installation and use of a child passenger restraint system.
- (B) As the proceeds from fines become available, county or city health departments shall prepare and maintain a listing of all child passenger restraint low-cost purchase or loaner programs in their counties, including a semiannual verification that all

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programs listed are in existence. Each county or city shall forward the listing to the Office of Traffic Safety in the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency and the courts, birthing centers, community child health and disability prevention programs, county clinics, prenatal clinics, women, infants, and children programs, and county hospitals in that county, who shall make the listing available to the public. The Office of Traffic

- Safety shall maintain a listing of all of the programs in the state.

  (2) Twenty-five percent to the county or city for the administration of the program.
- (3) Fifteen percent to the city, to be deposited in its general fund except that, if the violation occurred in an unincorporated area, this amount shall be allocated to the county for purposes of paragraph (1).
- SEC. 8. Section 27361 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:
- 27361. A law enforcement officer reasonably suspecting a violation of Section 27360, 27360.1, or 27360.5, may stop a vehicle transporting a child appearing to the officer to be within the age specified in Section 27360, 27360.1, or 27360.5. The officer may issue a notice to appear for a violation of Section 27360, 27360.1, or 27360.5.
- SEC. 9. Section 27363 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:
- 27363. (a) The court may exempt from the requirements of this article a class of child by age, weight, or size if it is determined that the use of a child passenger restraint system would be impractical by reason of physical unfitness, medical condition, or size. The court may require satisfactory proof of the child's physical unfitness, medical condition, or size and that an appropriate special needs child passenger restraint system is not available.
- (b) In case of a life-threatening emergency, or when a child is being transported in an authorized emergency vehicle, if a child passenger restraint system—available is not available, a child may be transported without the use of that system, but the child shall be secured by a seatbelt.
- 38 (c) A child weighing more than 40 pounds may be transported 39 in the back seat of a vehicle while wearing only a lap safety belt

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when the back seat of the vehicle is not equipped with a combination lap and shoulder safety belt.

- (d) (1) Notwithstanding Section 27360, a child or ward under the age of eight years who is 4 feet 9 inches in height or taller may be properly restrained by a safety belt rather than a child passenger restraint system.
- (2) For purposes of Section 27360, a child shall be properly secured in a rear-facing child passenger restraint system unless that child is one year of age or more and also weighs 20 pounds or more.
- (e) For purposes of <u>Section Sections</u> 27360 and 27360.1, a child or ward under 13 years of age may ride properly secured in an appropriate child passenger restraint system or safety belt meeting applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards in the front seat of a motor vehicle under the following circumstances::
  - (1) There is no rear seat.
  - (2) The rear seats are side-facing jump seats.
  - (3) The rear seats are rear-facing seats.
- (4) The child passenger restraint system cannot be installed properly in the rear seat.
- (5) All rear seats are already occupied by children 12 years of age or under.
- (6) Medical reasons necessitate that the child or ward not ride in the rear seat. The court may require satisfactory proof of the child's medical condition.
- (f) Notwithstanding subdivision (e), a child shall not be transported in a rear-facing child passenger restraint system in the front seat of a motor vehicle that is equipped with an active frontal passenger airbag.
- SEC. 10. Section 27363.5 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:
- 27363.5. (a) A public or private hospital, clinic, or birthing center, shall, at the time of the discharge of a child provide and discuss information on the current law requiring child passenger restraint systems safety belts and transporting children in rear seats to the parents or to the person to whom the child is released if the child is under 13 years of age.
- 38 (b) A public or private hospital, clinic, or birthing center shall not be responsible for the failure of the parent or person to whom the child is released to properly transport the child.

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SEC. 11. Section 27365 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

- 3 27365. (a) (1) A car rental agency in California shall inform 4 each of its customers of Section 27360 by posting, in a place 5 conspicuous to the public in each established place of business of 6 the agency, a notice not smaller than 15 by 20 inches which 7 states the following: "CALIFORNIA LAW REQUIRES ALL 8 CHILDREN UNDER 8 YEARS OF AGE TO BE TRANSPORTED IN THE REAR SEAT OF THE VEHICLE IN A CHILD RESTRAINT SYSTEM. CALIFORNIA LAW 10 REQUIRES ALL CHILDREN BETWEEN 8 AND 12 YEARS 11 OF AGE TO BE TRANSPORTED IN THE REAR SEAT OF 12 THE VEHICLE IN EITHER A CHILD RESTRAINT SYSTEM 13 14 OR A SAFETY BELT. THIS AGENCY IS REQUIRED TO 15 PROVIDE FOR RENTAL A CHILD RESTRAINT SYSTEM IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A CHILD RESTRAINT SYSTEM 16 17 YOURSELF." 18
  - (2) The posted notice specified in paragraph (1) is not required if the car rental agency's place of business is located in a hotel that has a business policy prohibiting the posting of signs or notices in any area of the hotel. In that case, a car rental agency shall furnish a written notice to each customer that contains the same information as required for the posted notice.

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- (b) A car rental agency in California shall have available for, and shall, upon request, provide for rental to, adults traveling with children under eight years of age, child passenger restraint systems that are certified by the manufacturer to meet applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards for use by children, are in good and safe condition, with no missing original parts, and are not older than five years.
- 31 (c) A violation of this section is an infraction punishable by a 32 fine of one hundred dollars (\$100).
- 33 SEC. 12. Section 42001 of the Vehicle Code is amended to 34 read:
- 35 42001. (a) Except as provided in subdivision (e) of Section
- 36 21464, or Section 42000.5, 42001.1, 42001.2, 42001.3, 42001.5,
- 37 42001.7, 42001.8, 42001.9, 42001.11, 42001.12, 42001.13,
- 38 42001.14, 42001.15, 42001.16, or subdivision (a) of Section
- 39 42001.17, Section 42001.18, or Section 42001.20, or subdivision
- 40 (b), (c), or (d) of this section, Article 3.3 (commencing with

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1 Section 27360) of Chapter 5 of Division 12, or Article 2 2 (commencing with Section 42030), a person convicted of an 3 infraction for a violation of this code or of a local ordinance 4 adopted pursuant to this code shall be punished as follows:

- (1) By a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100).
- (2) For a second infraction occurring within one year of a prior infraction which resulted in a conviction, a fine not exceeding two hundred dollars (\$200).
- (3) For a third or any subsequent infraction occurring within one year of two or more prior infractions which resulted in convictions, a fine not exceeding two hundred fifty dollars (\$250).
- (b) Every person convicted of a misdemeanor violation of Section 2800, 2801, or 2803, insofar as they affect failure to stop and submit to inspection of equipment or for an unsafe condition endangering any person, shall be punished as follows:
- (1) By a fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50) or imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding five days.
- (2) For a second conviction within a period of one year, a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100) or imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding 10 days, or *by* both that fine and imprisonment.
- (3) For a third or any subsequent conviction within a period of one year, a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500) or imprisonment in the county jail not exceeding six months, or *by* both that fine and imprisonment.
- (c) A pedestrian convicted of an infraction for a violation of this code or any local ordinance adopted pursuant to this code shall be punished by a fine not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50).
- (d) A person convicted of a violation of subdivision (a) or (b) of Section 27150.3 shall be punished by a fine of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250), and a person convicted of a violation of subdivision (c) of Section 27150.3 shall be punished by a fine of one thousand dollars (\$1,000).
- (e) Notwithstanding—any *a* other provision of law, any local public entity that employs peace officers, as designated under Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section 830) of Title 3 of Part 2 of the Penal Code, the California State University, and the University of California may, by ordinance or resolution, establish a schedule of fines applicable to infractions committed

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by bicyclists within its jurisdiction.—Any A fine, including all penalty assessments and court costs, established pursuant to this subdivision shall not exceed the maximum fine, including penalty assessment and court costs, otherwise authorized by this code for that violation. If a bicycle fine schedule is adopted, it shall be used by the courts having jurisdiction over the area within which the ordinance or resolution is applicable instead of the fines, including penalty assessments and court costs, otherwise applicable under this code.

10 SEC. 13. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution 11 12 because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or 13 school district will be incurred because this act creates a new 14 crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes 15 the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the 16 17 definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article 18 XIII B of the California Constitution.